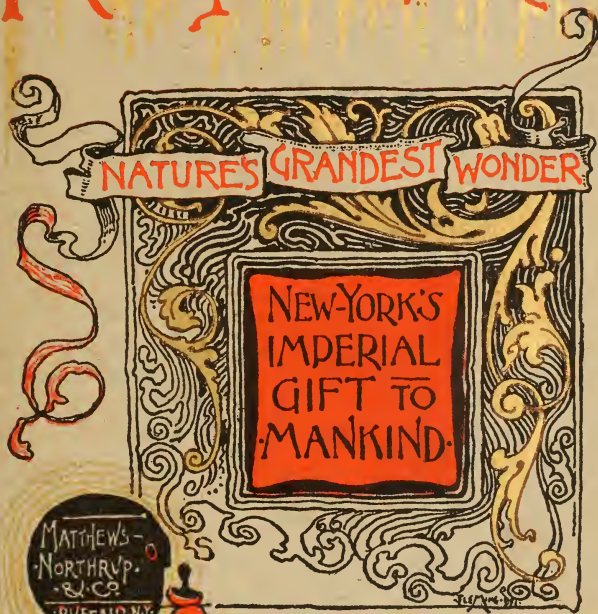


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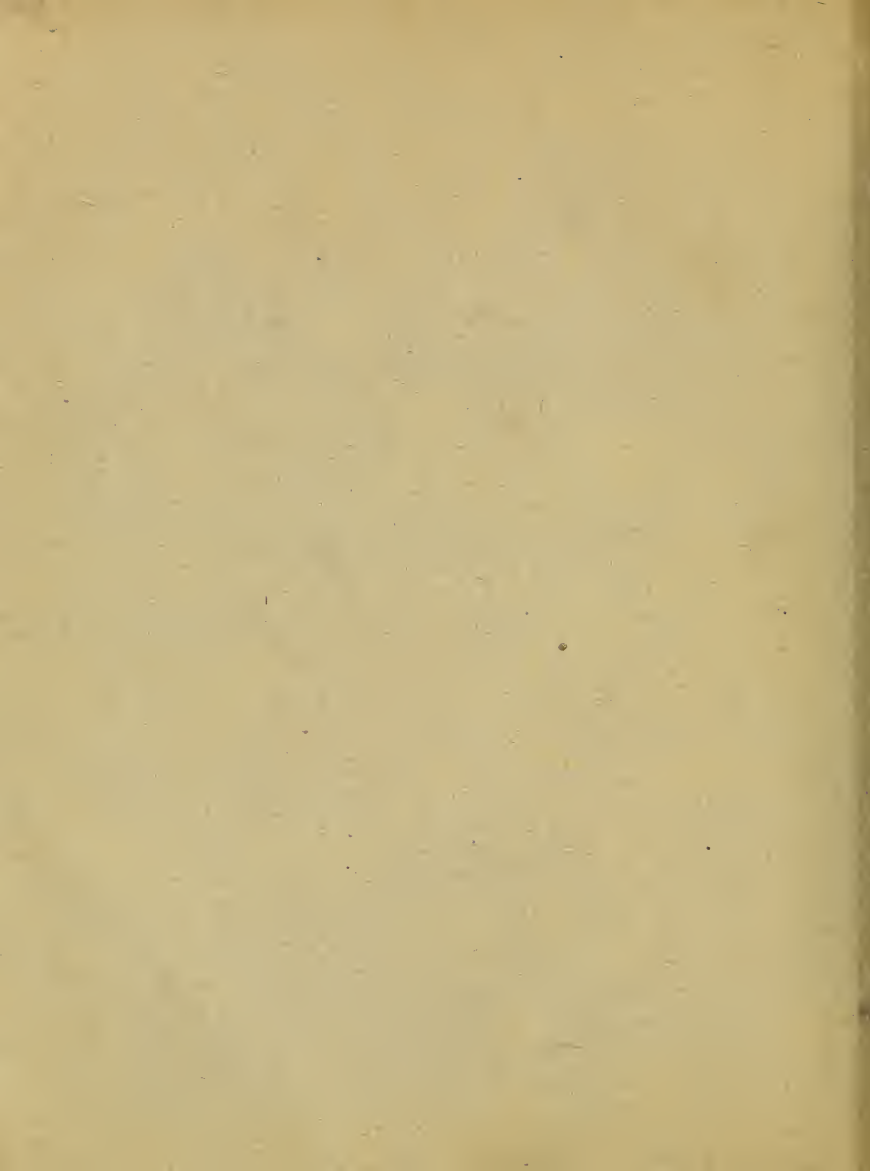
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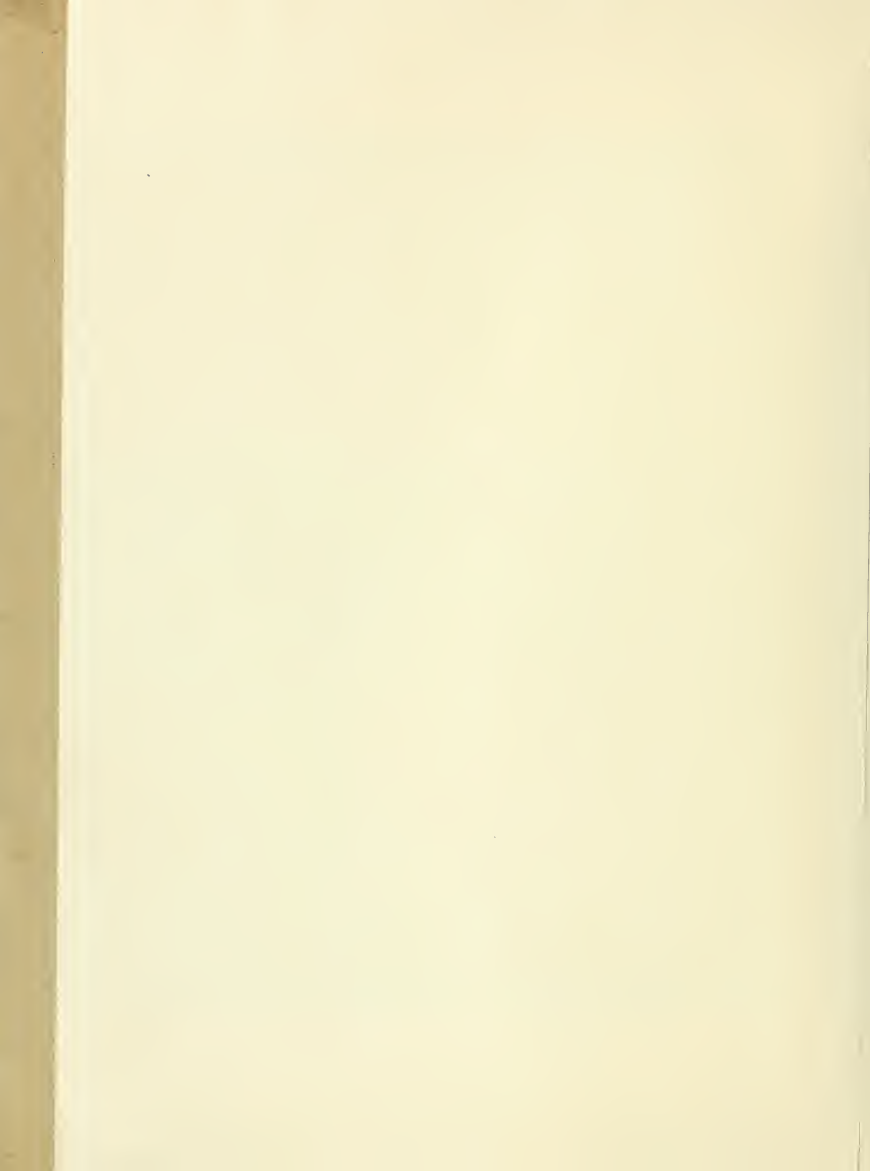
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IDEAL VIEW UP THE AMERICAN RAPIDS AFTER THE VILLAGE SHORE AND BATH ISLAND ARE RESTORED



..FREE·NIAGARA..



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: FREE NIAGARA:

Nature's Grandest Wonder.

New-York's Imperial Gift

IN a report to the Legislature of 1880 the Commissioners of the State Survey used these words: "Within certain limits at Niagara there are probably a larger number of distinct and rare qualities of beauty, in combinations of rock, foliage, mist, sky and water, than in any other equal space of the earth's surface, and although the gorge of the river for miles below is very interesting, and the broad, smooth water about the Rapids, with its low shores, is an important feature of a marvelous landscape effect, the grounds of attraction in these more distant parts being more nearly paralleled elsewhere, the distinctive interest of Niagara, as compared with that of other attractive scenery, is remarkably circumscribed and concentrated."

These matchless conditions, so forcibly displayed by the Commissioners, must be held to be the most important factor in making Free Niagara a possibility. Once convinced that the purchase of a narrow neck of land would assure them control of the most beautiful region ever seen by man in his waking hours, the people of New-York were not long in deciding to ratify the bargain.

The principle enunciated by the Director of the Survey in a communication to the same Legislature is forcibly illustrated in this view: "It is now a clearly recognized duty of governments to reserve from sale parts of the public domain that constitute natural features of such unusual character as to be objects of interest to the whole world, and whose perfection may be seriously marred by private ownership. Free enjoyment of these noblest works of nature is now felt to be one of man's most precious privileges, not to be

to
Mankind.



abridged by private rights or greed for gain. Acting on this principle, the General Government in 1865 dispossessed settlers in the Yosemite Valley, and reserved it for the benefit of the public. A great tract covering the region of the Yellowstone Geysers has also been designated as a National Park, and now the land occupied by the California Big Trees is dedicated to public use. The State of New-York also has taken a similar position respecting the beautiful islands of Lake George."

If more sordid arguments were needed to induce the people to exercise their right of eminent domain over Niagara, they were found in a report addressed to the Legislature, as follows: "There can be few intelligent citizens of New-York who are not aware from personal observation that a large and rapidly augmenting revenue is flowing into all its channels of business and into the public treasury, because of the attractions which the people of other States and countries find in the scenery of the Hudson, the Mohawk, the Susquehanna, the Delaware and the Genesee; of Lake Champlain, Lake George and numerous smaller bodies of water. . . . Niagara Falls is not simply the crowning glory of the great resources of the State of this class, but the highest distinction of the nation and of the continent. . . . The private land ownership and individual enterprise, which elsewhere work favorably to the interests of the State, by aiding the purpose of travelers, at Niagara stand in its way. . . . The pecuniary loss from this evil to the people of the State is incalculably greater than the outlay which would be required to carry out the scheme proposed and bring it to an end."

Sentiment and self-interest worked together to make Free Niagara an accomplished fact.

Every one who writes of Niagara, of necessity begins with Father Hennepin. This is, because that romancing chronicler of the New-World journeyings of the *Sieur de la Salle* began the story of Niagara, whose wonders he depicted in a (for him) surprisingly moderate and just way. Perhaps the holy influence of Niagara had not left the worthy *Pere* when he wrote in Holland the chapters of his "New Discovery," which tell how, "betwixt the Lakes Ontario and Erie, there is a vast and prodigious cadence of water which falls down after a surprising and astonishing manner;" or, more probable still, he thought the slightly-varnished truth about the Great Cataract's wonders would prove the best romance in Seventeenth-Century estimation. However that may be, it is a curious fact that the first historian of the region found a public use for it. He urged the erection of forts on the river to divert the Indian fur traders from New-York to Canada. Before Hennepin's time, Jacques Cartier had heard of the Falls, but he never visited them.

In 1805, the brothers Porter—Judge Augustus and General Peter B.—made their purchase from the State of four lots in the Mile Strip, lying both

above and below the Falls. A few years later they bought up Samuel Sherwood's "soldier scrip," which called for 200 acres of unappropriated land anywhere in the State, and located their "float" on the Goat Island group. Gen. Whitney built the first hotel in 1815. Niagara was even then, in a quiet way, becoming a world's resort, though comparatively young men can remember when the country round about was unbroken wilderness. A carriage road down the bank to the Canadian ferry was made in 1829, so perhaps that date may be assigned for the evolution of the hackman. But the early custodians of the Cataract must not be judged by some generations of their successors. The Golden Age of Niagara has been thus pleasingly described by an old resident: "Some forty years ago, and for many years thereafter, Niagara was, emphatically, a pleasant and attractive watering-place; the town was quiet, the accommodations were comfortable; the people were kind, considerate and attentive; guides were civil, intelligent and truthful; conveyances were good, and were in charge of careful and respectful attendants; commissions were unknown; 'scalping' was left to the Indians; nobody was annoyed or importuned; the flowers bloomed, the birds caroled, the full-leaved trees furnished refreshing shade, and the air was balmy. Then the lowing of cows in the street, the guttural note of the swine, and the voice of the solicitor were not heard. Elderly people came to stay for pleasant recreation and quiet enjoyment; younger people to 'bill and coo' and dance." This is the testimony of Mr. George W. Holley, of Niagara Falls.

But, writing only two years ago, Mr. Holley added: "Now all that is changed. A contemporary writer once described the moral status of a famous stock-jobbing locality by saying that 'ten thousand a year is the Sermon on the Mount for Wall Street.' The same gospel is popular at Niagara." The goose that laid the golden egg was once again killed by the same old wrong-headed desire on the part of its keepers to realize the entire Pactolian harvest at once. Niagara ceased to be a fashionable resort; then it was no longer a popular resort; and, not a great many years after the dry-rot had begun to work, "they" even ceased to go thither on "Their Wedding-Journey." Hence the justness of the remark made by the Commissioners of the State Survey in 1880, that Niagara had no summer population, and that at no other notable pleasure resort of Europe or America was the stay of travelers so short. Niagara became known as one of Nature's beauty spots for which man had done too much.

In the next stage of its career, indigenous man, baulked of his accustomed subsidies from sight-seeing man, began to take his tolls for the loving care he had bestowed upon it from the great Cataract itself. There were mills at Niagara when the region was still a Mecca for the tourist; but they became numerous and offensive only after the hotel-clerk grew accustomed to flashing his diamond across deserted corridors, and the charioteer went for days at a stretch without tasting blood. During the period of prosperity, too, caravansaries and bazaars



had begun to close in on the devoted river with their unlovely structures, and, of course, every coign of vantage had its toll-gate. After the flow of summer travel was diverted, grants of "water privileges" became more common, and the lordly Niagara shortly found itself degraded to turning mill-wheels for paper-manufacturers and flour-makers. Just as if there were not hundreds of streams in the world that could turn wheels, and as if there were more than one Niagara!

There is a series of heliotype prints extant, prepared from photographic negatives taken by Mr. George Barker, of Niagara Falls, which shows better than any words can what the river became under this *regime*. One of these plates exhibits the disfigured banks on the village shore of the Upper American Falls. The natural setting of trees and shrubs is gone, and the Rapids find themselves hemmed in and obtruded upon by the wooden piazza of a "bazaar" and the mock-Grecian rear elevations of a hotel. Few who knew Bath Island in its better estate can look upon the faithful reproduction of its mill-ridden latter condition without a shudder. Contrast these examples of desecration with the natural banks that still remain, and with Mr. Olmsted's idealization of the restored American Rapids,* and the *raison d'être* of the Free Niagara movement and its success is at once seen.

In the summer of 1878, Lucius Robinson, then Governor of New-York, had a casual conversation with Lord Dufferin, who was at that time Governor-General of Canada, which he deemed so important that, in the following January, he embodied its purport in his annual message to the Legislature. Lord Dufferin in this interview reiterated views that had been cropping out in periodical and newspaper literature for a decade previous, that had been expressed by many distinguished visitors to the Falls during that interval, and that were quite generally shared in by old and public-spirited residents of Western New-York: That an international park, enclosing a suitable space on each side of the river from which all the annoyances and vexations which were giving rise to so much complaint should be removed, was the only salvation of Niagara. Subsequently, and before Gov. Robinson's message was transmitted to the Legislature, Lord Dufferin called the attention of the Government of Ontario to the matter, and recommended coöperation with New-York. Gov. Robinson's message suggested that in case a Commission was appointed from Ontario, New-York should create a corresponding and coöperating body. The Commissioners of the State Survey constituted the Commission named. By joint resolution of the Legislature of 1879 they were "directed to enquire, consider and report what, if any, measures it may be expedient for the State to adopt for carrying out the suggestions contained in the annual message of the Governor, with respect to Niagara Falls." The Commissioners were also



* See frontispiece.

authorized to confer with any similar persons representing the Dominion of Canada or the Province of Ontario, "making a similar enquiry or contemplating measures for a similar purpose."

The Commissioners' report was transmitted to the Legislature on March 22, 1880, by Horatio Seymour, President of the Board, and was signed by Commissioners William A. Wheeler, Robert S. Hale, William Dorsheimer, Francis A. Stout, George Geddes and F. A. P. Barnard. They stated that in carrying out the direction of the Legislature, they had instructed Mr. James T. Gardiner, Director of the Survey, to examine and report to them on such a project as was contemplated by the Legislature, and had associated with him Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, the landscape architect. The Commissioners endorsed all that Messrs. Gardiner and Olmsted had to say, and stated that in the previous September the Board had held a conference with the members of the Ministry of the Province of Ontario, when a feeling was disclosed which justified the belief that Canada would meet New-York fully half-way. As appears by the remarks of Messrs. Olmsted and Gardiner, appended to the Commissioners' report, they examined the Canadian as well as the American shore of the river. Mr. Olmsted's notes were mainly on the aesthetics of Niagara and the despite the Philistines were doing them. The Director recommended the taking of Goat and its sister islets (Bath Island to be restored by planting), and a strip of land on the river front of Niagara Falls Village a mile long and widening from 100 feet at the head of the Rapids to 800 feet broad at the Falls, and from which the village should be "planted out." The final appraisement followed these lines very closely, though the tract located by the second Commission is rather smaller than that recommended by the Director. Mr. Gardiner's suggestion that the right to plant trees on the edge of the cliff below the Suspension Bridge be obtained from the Hydraulic Canal owners, has not been adopted.

Gov. Cornell sent to the Legislature with the report of the Commissioners of the State Survey a remarkable memorial asking for the enfranchisement of Niagara, which had been addressed in duplicate to the Governor-General of Canada and the Governor of New-York by about 600 of the most eminent men of the United States, Canada and Great Britain. Among the signers of the memorial were Vice-President Wheeler, the entire bench of the Supreme Court of the United States, Senators of the United States, an Admiral of the Navy, Members of Congress, Members of the British and Canadian Parliaments, Prof. Max Müller, Sir John Lubbock, Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Holmes, Palfrey, Parkman, Agassiz, Charles Francis Adams, Cardinal McCloskey, Bishops Paddock, Clark, Niles, McNeirney, Doane and Cox, artists, college presidents, army officers, State officials, and merchant princes.

A bill designed to carry out the Commissioners' recommendations was at





once introduced, and passed the Assembly, but died in the Senate because not reported till the fag-end of the session. Niagara seemingly had no friends in the Legislature of 1881, for though the Park bill was re-introduced, no effort was made to secure its passage. The session of 1882 passed without a move toward emancipation. In the fall of that year the citizens took the work in charge. The first gun in the campaign, which closed only in victory two years and a half later, was fired at a private meeting held in the house of Mr. Howard Potter, in New-York City, on the evening of December 6th. Speeches were made by Messrs. Olmsted, Potter, Dorsheimer and others, and the outcome was a public meeting, held at Municipal Hall on January 11th following. There was formed "The Niagara Falls Association," a body for whose efforts in behalf of Free Niagara the world owes much gratitude. Howard Potter was its first President. Among the Vice-Presidents were George William Curtis and Cornelius Vanderbilt. J. Hampden Robb, afterward a Commissioner of the State Reservation at Niagara, was chairman of the Executive Committee, and drew a new bill, which was introduced into the Assembly by the Hon. Jacob F. Miller, of New-York, on January 30, 1883. The measure was advocated before the Committee on Ways and Means by Bishop Doane, Howard Potter, ex-Lieutenant-Gov. Dorsheimer and others, the opposition being represented by the attorneys of a single wood-pulp firm at the Falls. The bill passed the Assembly on the 14th of March, by 68 to 39. A number of Assemblymen took occasion to show their sympathy while the measure was on its final passage, the Hon. Thomas V. Welch, of Niagara Falls, in especial, bringing honor upon himself and credit to his constituency by his eloquence and earnestness. In the Senate there was opposition encountered. The oratorical giants of the Niagara Falls Association wrestled with the Finance Committee, only to be thrown. The bill was reported unfavorably, but the report was disagreed with, and the bill ordered to a third reading. Then the Association, after issuing an address to the people of the State, renewed the fight in open Senate. The bill was at no time a party measure, and "practical politicians" and "doctrinaires" have been among its partisans. Petitions and memorials again came into play at this juncture. When the bill passed (April 18, 1883,) it was by a vote of 21 to 10. It received Gov. Cleveland's signature on the 30th of April.

The Commissioners provided for, as nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, were: Messrs. William Dorsheimer, Andrew H. Green, J. Hampden Robb, Sherman S. Rogers and Martin B. Anderson. Mr. Dorsheimer was a lawyer and statesman and a native of the Niagara region, though a resident of New-York City. He had served the State as Lieutenant-Governor. Mr. Green had been Comptroller of New-York, and was versed in land values. Mr. Robb, of New-York, had great experience in large business affairs and as a Senator in the State Legislature. Mr. Rogers represented Buffalo, and was an early member of the Niagara Falls Association. He was

FALLS OF NIAGARA

Showing the State Reservation.

PREPARED FROM THE STATE COMMISSIONERS' SURVEY, AND
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BOUNDARY OF THE STATE 'RESERVATION' AT NIAGARA

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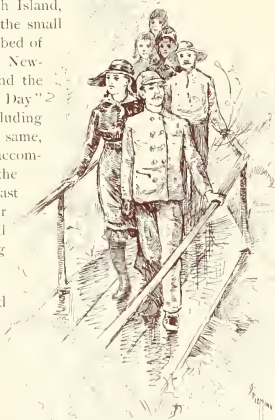


also a leader of the Erie County Bar and formerly a member of the New-York Senate. Mr. Anderson was the venerable and learned President of the University of Rochester. The three metropolitan members of the Commission were Democrats; the western members, Republicans. They all serve without pay, the term of office of each being five years. The Board met to organize, in Albany, on the 29th of May, when Dr. Anderson was made President, and Mr. Robb Treasurer and Secretary. The Commissioners found available a fund of \$10,000 with which to carry out the object of their creation.

The first meeting at Niagara began on the 9th of June. A resolution, adopted after a careful and detailed examination of the lands adjacent to the Falls, may be given entire:

Resolved, That in the judgment of this Board it is desirable to select and locate as proper and necessary to be reserved for the purpose of preserving the scenery of the Falls of Niagara and of restoring the said scenery to its natural condition, the following lands situate in the Village of Niagara and the County of Niagara, to-wit: Goat Island, Bath Island, the Three Sisters, Bird Island, Luna Island, Chapin Island, and the small islands adjacent to said islands in the Niagara River, and the bed of said river between said islands and the main land of the State of New-York; and, also, the bed of said river between Goat Island and the Canadian boundary; also, a strip of land beginning near "Port Day" in said village, running along the shore of said river, and to including "Prospect Park" and the cliff and *débris* slope, under the same, substantially as shown by that part colored green on the map accompanying the fourth report of the Board of Commissioners of the State Survey, dated March 22, 1880; and including, also, at the east end of said strip, sufficient land not exceeding one acre for purposes convenient to said reservation, and also including all lands at the foot of said falls, and all lands in said river adjoining said islands and the other lands hereinbefore described.

The Commissioners were represented in these and subsequent proceedings by Mr. Ansley Wilcox, of the law firm of Allen, Movius & Wilcox, Buffalo, attorneys for the Board. The interested property-owners have been represented first and last by a great array of eminent counsel. The petition for the appointment of Commissioners to appraise the lands selected was presented at a special term of the Supreme Court, held in Buffalo on the 2d of February, 1884. Justice Daniels, on the same day, named as Appraisers of the lands to be taken, the Hon. Matthew Hale, of Albany; the Hon. Luther R. Marsh, of New-York; and Mr.



DOING THE
CAVE OF
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THE NEW
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THE MIST:



Pascal P. Pratt, of Buffalo—two lawyers and one merchant. The Appraisers went very promptly to work, and as a result handed in a report awarding damages amounting in the aggregate to \$1,433,429.50. The report was confirmed on the 27th of October by Justice Corlett. The Appraisers found it necessary to divide the condemned property into twenty-seven "cases," in which awards were made as follows: For parcels one and four comprising Goat, Luna, etc., with a portion of Bath Island, was paid \$525,000, to the representatives of the Porter estate. The sum of \$156,666 was paid into court for the portion of Bath Island occupied by the Niagara Falls Paper Manufacturing Company. For the portion of the Cataract House included in parcels twenty-four and thirty-one was awarded \$110,600. Albert H. Porter received \$2,001 and \$31,070 for lots on Water and Canal Streets. Jane S. Townsend, for lots on Water and Canal Streets, received \$12,638, \$2,212 and \$18,158.50. For Thomas Tugby's lots (the Goat Island Hotel property) there was awarded \$60,200. The Porter Pump lot brought \$4,000. Albert H. Porter received \$6,440 for lots on Canal Street, and the Witmer heirs \$25,166 for the property in parcel thirty-three. For the A. H. Porter homestead was paid \$10,140, and that gentleman received \$2,780 for a vacant lot on Buffalo Street. Other awards were: Solon M. N. Whitney, \$9,500; Elizabeth J. Townsend, \$11,000 and \$2,070; Vincent M. Porter, \$1,200, and Ethan H. Howard, mortgagee, \$750; Jane S. Townsend, \$3,600; Elizabeth P. Church, \$6,333; Mary E. Daniels, mortgagee, \$3,500; the Erie County Savings Bank, mortgagee, \$8,000; heirs of Augustus S. Porter, \$1,200; Josephine M. Porter, \$6,520. On account of street property encroached upon, the Village and Town of Niagara and adjoining property-holders were given \$5,835. The Prospect Park property brought \$325,000. Hill & Murray, proprietors of the pulp mill, have appealed from the decision of the Appraisers. The award to them was \$81,690.

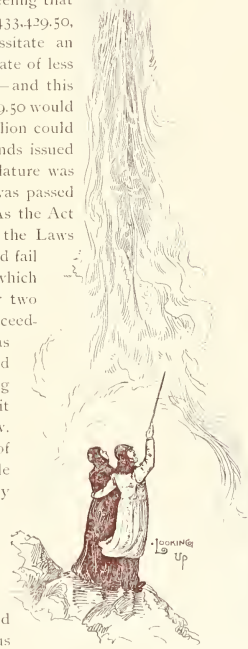
The most interesting and important legal question that the Appraisers were called upon to decide was as to the claim of the riparian owners to own to the *filum aque* or thread of the stream. It was claimed on their part that the common law doctrine as to fresh-water rivers applied to the Niagara, and that the property-owners on the river-fronts should be awarded damages for the loss of water power consequent on the taking of lands in the bed of the river. There were several minor points raised, but the main issue was as to whether the Niagara, in all its parts, was a navigable stream in the sense that an arm of the sea is navigable. The Appraisers held that it was such, and disallowed the claims. Two elaborate and learned opinions were rendered to



this effect, by Appraiser Hale and Appraisers Marsh and Pratt. After the exclusion of such claims, the demands of the owners amounted to about \$4,000,000—a reduction of about \$16,000,000 from the demands before the decision. As has been seen, the total actual awards amounted to but a little more than one-third of the former sum.

The next and by far the most important step yet taken in the Niagara rescue work was to secure the appropriation by the Legislature of the moneys awarded by the Appraisers' report. It was shown by the newspapers which had favored the movement from the first, or had been converted to its support as the Park project took form, that the State was in condition to pay the million and a half, or less, asked for by the Appraisers without the taxpayers feeling that their burdens had been materially added to. The entire \$1,433,429.50, if spread on the tax-rolls for a single year, would necessitate an increase in the assessment on the taxable property of the State of less than one-half a mill in the dollar. But it was suggested—and this was ultimately done—that the appropriation of the \$433,429.50 would be sufficient for the first year (1885), and that the even million could be distributed over a series of years, and be secured by bonds issued to the citizens whose lands had been taken. The Legislature was again petitioned and wrought with, and the appropriation was passed toward the close of the session, in the month of April. As the Act creating the State Reservation at Niagara—chapter 336 of the Laws of 1883—had provided that, in case the Legislature should fail to make an appropriation to pay the owners for the lands which should be selected and located before April 30, 1885—or two years after the date of the passage of the Act—all the proceedings should be void and of no effect, much anxiety was shown lest the bill fall between the stools of the Capitol and the Executive Chamber. There were delays in engrossing and in transmitting the measure to the Governor, and it actually received his signature on the last day allowed by law.

The suspense killed one or two incipient contests of awards which were expected, the claimants discovering, while the fate of the appropriation bill hung in doubt, that they were willing to sell their property to the State at the price offered. The people of Niagara Falls, in general, were highly pleased at the triumph of the Free Niagara movement. The manufacturers and landed proprietors had been paid a fair price for their property, and were satisfied. The hotel-keepers had, all along, seen in Free Niagara revived prosperity and increased patronage. Even the "rapacious





hackman" admitted himself to be in favor of any move that would "help business." Perhaps the element that made merchandise of Niagara had only been waiting to be saved from themselves. That the establishment of the State Park will greatly enhance the popularity of Niagara there can be little

As seen from Westley Park.

doubt. An International Park would extend the prosperity to the entire region. It is only a question of brief time till Canada shall enclose the most imposing natural features on her side of the river. Surveys for a park are even now being made by the Dominion Government. It will be a proud and happy day for the two great peoples of the Western Continent when all Niagara shall be free.

Several minor improvements are already—at an early date in the summer of 1885—springing up in the sunlight of Free Niagara, established and prospective. The Niagara Falls International Camp-meeting Association propose to make Wesley Park, on the Canadian side of the river, “the Chautauqua of Canada.” Another improvement belonging to the immediate future is a boulevard, or, more properly, a shaded driveway from Buffalo to Niagara, a stretch of twenty-two miles of magnificent country.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

“One never tires of Niagara,” said a white-haired man, as he stood on Terrapin Rocks, trying to point out to a companion the precise spot where the old tower stood. “I doubt if custom could stale it if it were always the same; but it possesses infinite variety. I have been a visitor to Niagara at intervals for many years, and at each return I see changes. The structural changes, which the cataracts are ever undergoing, are easily to be detected by others than the geologists. Then, the shifting of the seasons varies not only the frame, but the picture. While these woods are running almost the entire gamut of color in the course of the year, the waters they fringe are changing temper if not complexion with them. Niagara never disappoints the pilgrim, and never palls upon her intimates.”

His companion, a younger man, nodded appreciatively. They had been strangers ten minutes previous to this conversation, but Niagara had opened their hearts and loosened their tongues. Then, as they watched the amber of the river as it emerges from the Rapids become cream in the abyss below the Horseshoe Fall, the younger man told his senior of Niagara's latest change of fortune. The graybeard had heard something in his distant home of the great popular movement in New-York State to replace the Falls and their surroundings in the public domain, and the youth gave him the details of the work which had resulted in the formal establishment of “The State Reservation at Niagara.” The old man being full of the traditions of the region, and the young one somewhat versed in its more recent history, and both Niagara lovers, it so befell that they found mutual interest in following in



FLEMING

the footsteps of those Niagara-rescuers, the Park Commissioners and Appraisers. The time was after the appropriation bill had become law, and before "Prospect Park gate was tied back with a string,"—to quote from a native's forecasting of the events of the best 15th of July New-York State ever saw.

In order to begin at the beginning, the pair went east on the main street of Niagara Falls Village—ever and anon saying a mild nay to the philanthropists who offered to drive them "to all the points of interest for ten cents"—almost to the corporation line. The Erie Railway Depot and Seventh Street are the only "points of interest" lying easterly of Port Day, which the young man intimated to his friend was one of the termini of the Reservation. The veteran remembered that Port Day was the name given to the entrance to the hydraulic canal, which H. H. Day built to supply power to the mills. The pleasant riverside walk also ends here, and the Park territory at this point will permit the double driveway, which it is proposed to construct, to receive a circular termination.

The river-walk, or River Street, pierces the middle of the strip of land which the Commissioners have taken in the village, and which extends from Port Day to Prospect Park, also a part of the Reservation. The limits of this strip were laid out to coincide with a natural ridge or terrace which follows the bend of the shore at an average distance from the water through the greater part of its length of from one hundred to two hundred feet, certain modifications being made to conform to the lines of existing streets.

Within this ridge are embraced all the points from which the Falls are visible. The homestead of George W. Holley, the historian of Niagara, which looks out upon the river, near Port Day, will lose its doorsteps when the Commissioners' line is drawn. The same line marches over Mr. Peter A. Porter's lawn, and a dwelling on the bank owned by him will have to be razed. The proprietors of the Cataract House propose to compensate themselves for the loss of their kitchen by building a fine new front on the "strip." The "river parlors" of the Cataract House, a detached building by the margin where the Appraisers did their work, are wholly within the condemned line. The State of New-York will henceforth own the ground upon which stands the village's fine monument to its soldier-dead. Mill Street will be closed by the taking of the acre strip, and the fate of another intersecting avenue is understood to be in the balance. Much of the mill property taken is situated between the proposed parkway and the river, and the proceeds of the sale of the mill-machinery can be made the nucleus of a maintenance fund.

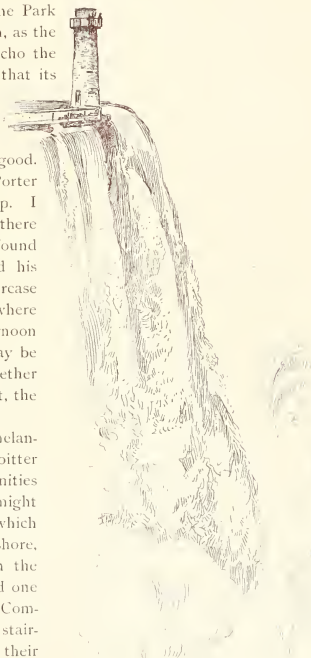
The easterly terminus of the Park is for practical purposes at the Suspension Bridge. The lovely domain of Prospect Park is the people's. "This has been the most popular feature of the speculators' Niagara—because the cheapest—and its fate as an adjunct of Free Niagara will have to be carefully



developed; it is, in a sense, 'made ground,' has been filled with 'side-shows,' and contains one fine view of the American Fall," remarked the guide to his companion, as they leaned over the parapet, trying to guess at the identity of the rubber-clothed beings scrambling about on the rocks at the foot of the inclined railroad.

"This noble tract of sixty-one acres is all of the Park there remains for us to see," went on the young man, as the companions passed the Goat Island turn-stile. "I echo the wish of the guide-book compilers," said the other, "that its name may be changed back to Iris Island. We have only to pass this pulp-mill to find woods that are much as they were left when all things were looked upon by their Maker and pronounced good. This is owing to the intelligent conservatism of the Porter family, the patrons of the islets in the Goat group. I fancy that, once the general admission fee is paid, there are more good free views, here, than are to be found anywhere else about Niagara." The speaker and his hearer were by this time descending the ancient staircase which terminates in the foot-bridge to Luna Island, where during three quarters of the year it is a misty afternoon in October. The atmosphere of Goat Island, it may be remarked, seems to be a vast reservoir of ozone. Whether under sunshine in the open, or shadow in the thicket, the air is pure enough to be of use as a tonic.

Presently the young man remarked: "If the melancholy Jacques had chewed the cud of sweet and bitter fancy hereabouts, he would have found rare opportunities for ridding himself of moods forever. See, how you might step from this tuft of grass into yonder torrent, which comes tearing on between those wooded banks. In shore, the water seems almost placid, but look at it in the middle of the stream, and think how two steps and one second of time would do it all. I hope the Commissioners will build more parapets and better stairways. The latter, indeed, appear to have had their constitutions undermined by the jack-knife attacks of the Nineteenth-Century tribes of the Goths and Vandals, who roam the world over to write their names across the faces of its holy places. I wonder how many times John Smith has subscribed himself with knife, pencil or paint about this region? Dr. Curcull has been here, too."



A Memory of
the Past:



"I suppose," began the other, reflectively (standing now near the Horse-shoe Fall again), "that no succeeding generation will appreciate Niagara as this one does or will do. Our children will know only Free Niagara, and will not have the personal recollection of the Era of Fences to add zest to their enjoyment of the boon."

The younger man laughed, and then said: "I hope that this generation isn't expecting too much of Free Niagara, but I fear that it is. There are people who will accept the invitation to be guests at the 'opening of the Park' in a very literal way. Without reflecting that the lands have only passed under the control of the Commission that very day, they will look, on the 15th of July, to see something resembling the popular conception of a park."

"But won't the hackman-abuse be done away with ultimately?"

"It is given unto man to hope. If the Commissioners are vested with the control of Falls Street, as there seems to be a very general desire in the village that they shall be, passengers from the railroad depots may be able to run the gauntlet with their lives—if the Commission's police happen to be near at hand. Free Niagara is but in its infancy. But the intelligence and public spirit which have brought about what there is of Free Niagara, may be trusted to order for the best most things in its after development."



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Calendar of Meetings for 1885.

TEMPERANCE CONVENTION, JULY 14—25.
MISSIONARY CONFERENCE, JULY 28—AUG. 7.

HOLINESS ASSOCIATION MEETINGS, AUG. 8—17.
INTERNATIONAL CAMP MEETING, AUG. 17—31.

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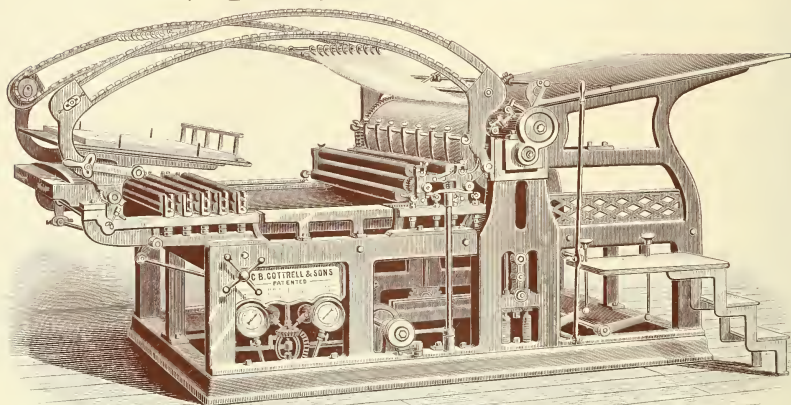
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